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ABCDE FOCUS

Spring 2015

President's Message

Greetings to one and all as we prepare to wind up another year. It has been a strange one, indeed. I expected, once settling into the second half of the year, that everything would begin to feel “normal” once again, but I never did seem to ever get my feet fully under me this year. I am still coming across jobs that would normally have been completed last June that are now a full year in the waiting. C'est la vie...I will get to them THIS June, right?

Regardless, a successful year has been had and the students have experienced a full year of fabulous drama-related opportunities and activities across the province thanks to the AMAZING dedication of all of our drama teachers.

I had the great good fortune of attending both the Sears ABCDE Drama Festival at Douglas College, and the Rotary Goodwill Shakespeare Festival in Summerland this spring where I was able to visit with hundreds of students and all the amazing teachers from, literally, every region of the province; I participated in phenomenal workshops and viewed stellar examples of the theatre work being done in BC. I am so proud of the courage, tenacity, creativity and sincerity our students are showing on stage, and back-stage, as they keep the beautiful and important art of live theatre alive in our communities.

Our one day mini-conference (#What's the 411) hosted by the Arts Club Theatre on Granville Island was reasonably well subscribed, and we look forward to having another BIG conference in the fall. The location is still to be determined. If YOU would like to host the conference this fall, there is a nice honorarium in it for your drama program!! Please contact either myself, or Gordon Hamilton to discuss the dates and needs, and what your role as location host would entail. Thank you for your consideration. And, speaking of the October Conference, there are many ways you can get involved in the ABCDE. Please consider putting your name forward to run for a position on the executive and get involved with our team of fun folks!

As this is the final newsletter for this year, I wish you all a restful and inspiring summer full of everything that you need to re-charge your creative spirits and vital energy to keep doing this very important work of mentoring students in the arts!! ~ *Lana O'Brien*

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2014/2015

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Spring mini-conference highlights!

On April 11th, a small but enthusiastic group of teachers got together on Granville Island for an amazing day of Professional Development. After the October conference was post-poned due to concerns regarding the Job Action, the executive immediately made plans to create an event in the Spring.

Teachers met at the Arts Club Theatre, and were generously hosted by Adam Caddell and the Arts Club. The day included three different workshops, a ticket to the matinee performance and a fantastic dinner at the Dockside restaurant. The format of the day allowed every person to participate in everything, and it was a lot of fun! The executive is already working on the October conference and we are looking forward to getting together again and seeing those regulars who missed coming around this year, and meeting new people as well.

Special thanks to Gordon Hamilton and Lana O'Brien for their work on the mini-conference!



SPOTLIGHT ON...

Timberline Secondary School
Campbell River, B.C.



Programs:

Drama 9

Drama 10-11-12

Musical Theatre (out of timetable)

Stagecraft (out of timetable)

NIRDFest participants 2015

Trip to New York 2015

Facility: Timberline shares the lecture theatre with North Island College. It is a lovely 190 seat venue with a tech booth and lights and sound at the ready. The sloped nature of the seats provides a comfortable audience experience, though being a 'lecture hall' versus a theatre means we are tight on space in the wings and for storage. We are lucky enough to have a dedicated Stagecraft program, under Paul Klein, that provides us with the sets necessary for each show so we don't have to worry about saving pieces we 'might' use again.

Productions: You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown 2015 (under the direction of Jana MacFarlane and Celine Oullette), previous productions under the direction of Danette Bell include Little Women, Aladdin, and Legally Blonde.

Upcoming: Hoping to plan another trip to the Big Apple for 2016, and have ideas for trips to Disneyland and London, England for workshops in the future. I would love to have a Musical Theatre class within the timetable in addition to the Musical Theatre Production. I have a dream to create a theatre/English course where students can obtain their English credit through the reading, discussing and performing of plays. Big plans to build Timberline's program!

ROTARY GOODWILL, SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL



500 students from all across the province as far west as West Vancouver to as far east as Nelson, converged together in lovely Summerland for the 15th annual Rotary Goodwill Shakespeare Festival from May 6 - 9th. And, as we seem to say every year, this was the “best festival ever!” The students participated in world-class workshops, shared fabulous shows all focused on Shakespeare’s brilliant work, were inspired by 2 incredible keynote addresses, and made lasting friendships while hanging out during group hotdog, pancake and medieval bread-bowl stew eating events; while dancing and singing together; while creating art and film and theatre spectacles; and while rooming together in the generous billet homes of the Summerland residents. Smiles and tears were shared as students loaded up their busses on Saturday evening to head for home. All those students not graduating vowed to return next year, while those who are graduating mourned the end of their last high school festival experience.

And, as always, the teachers enjoyed having time to sit and chat, and share a glass of vino while talking about how things are going in our corners of the world. This Goodwill festival is the highlight of OUR year too! A colossal thanks goes out to founder and life-blood of this festival - Linda Beaven!!!

Rotary Goodwill Shakespeare Festival



Travel Diary - New York, New York

The Big Apple was calling this year, and many teachers in our province took groups of kids to this fabulous city. If you've never been, and are thinking about going, there are many people who can give you some idea of how to start planning. Contact the executive for starters.

Many of us have experience with school trips. **Why New York?** It has so much to offer theatre kids (and teachers) alike! First of all, obviously, is the theatre! On my trip in May I saw FIVE shows, and fulfilled several dreams, including seeing Ramin Karimloo, Christian Borle, Brian D'Arcy James and Kristen Chenoweth live on stage! There is nothing like a Broadway show. Sure you saw Les Mis in Vancouver, but it doesn't match what happens on stage in New York! There's a reason why Broadway is the TOP! The best perform there!



I ran into another executive member while at the Statue of Liberty! Heather Lytle, from Smithers, was there with her students! Small world!

The city is also full of iconic landmarks that students love to experience. Highlights always include Times Square (shopping), Radio City Music Hall, Central Park and Liberty Island, but that is just a small taste of what you can see and experience when you are there. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, Chelsea Piers, The High Line, Brooklyn Bridge...the list goes on.

I always stay right in Manhattan when I go, as it allows the students to get to know the area they are staying in, and they don't start and end every day with a bus ride into New Jersey (a popular option if you want to save money.) Times Square is nearby, and walking everywhere is the norm. We take precautions, and walk around in groups, but the city is really quite safe.

Of course just being there is enough! There's an energy and excitement that pulses through New York, and it's an energy that teenagers love, and I love showing it to them!

As soon as my trip is over I start thinking about the next time I will get to visit! It is a city that has captured my heart...(so much so, I am going back in July with my sisters and my Mom.)

~ Christine Knight, Carihi Secondary

If you have a Travel Diary you would like to share, contact Christine at Christine.Knight@sd72.bc.ca

SEARS BC DRAMA FESTIVAL

April 30 - May 3, Douglas College, New Westminster, B.C.

The **2015 Sears BC Drama Festival** was enjoyed immensely by the participants. Once again Douglas College hosted the event, with 150 delegates coming from eleven schools across the province to share their work and their culture.

The adjudicator was Jane Heyman, who has worked as a theatre professional for over 40 years, including time as an actor, director, and as the Associate Director at Studio 58. Her adjudications were thoughtful and articulate, and she made a large effort to determine what the participants wanted to know from her, and responded eloquently.

Following an opening production on the Dramaland theme by Brookwood Secondary from Langley, the festival was underway. Participants and audiences saw eight performances over three nights. In the daytime, professional theatre artists gave 90-minute workshops to students, with subjects ranging from special effects makeup and singing to acting and playwriting. As well as the main activities onstage and in the classrooms, the delegates also wowed-the-crowds with an open mic night on Friday, and let loose on the final evening dancing to the beats of ever-popular DJ Syncro.

Showcase Productions

Women and Wallace from Terry Fox Secondary in Port Coquitlam (teacher Dan Tilsley)
Out of Sight, Out of Mind from Heritage Park Secondary in Mission (teacher Elisa McRae)
Through The Mirror from Mount Elizabeth Secondary in Kitimat (teacher Rick Jones)
The Actor's Nightmare from G.P. Vanier Secondary in Courtenay (teacher Lori Mazey)
Never Swim Alone from Clayton Heights Secondary in Surrey (teacher Norma Rushton)

YouthWright Productions

Sat Sri Akal, India from Enver Creek Secondary in Surrey (teacher Jonathan McIntosh)
Holding On from G.W. Graham Secondary in Chilliwack (teacher Damon Fultz)
Paula and Karl's Road-trip from G.P. Vanier Secondary in Courtenay (teacher Lori Mazey)
As well, participants included Non-Performing Delegates from Queen Charlotte Secondary in Queen Charlotte (teacher Shelby Reinitz), Smithers Secondary in Smithers (teacher Heather Lytle) and W.J. Mouat Secondary in Abbotsford (teacher Brian Billo).

Sears B.C. Drama Scholarship Winners

Two scholarships were awarded by our panel, following applications and interviews. Each winner will receive \$1000 towards their post-secondary education costs.

- Leah Anthony from Mount Elizabeth Secondary, Kitimat (teacher Rick Jones)
- Kaitlyn Santa Juana from Brookwood Secondary, Langley (teacher Gordon Hamilton).

SEARS BC Drama Festival





British Columbia
Teachers' Federation

Become a member of the ABCDE... a PSA of the BCTF

#1 Do you want to join/subscribe to the ABCDE? Need to renew your membership? Online registration can be found at <https://www.bctf.ca/psa/join.aspx>

#2 Do you prefer to print off the application and mail it in? Find a link to the form at www.bcdramateachers.com

#3 Join our moderated email list-serv and connect with other Drama practitioners! Share ideas, ask for help, post info about your shows. Almost anything Drama-related goes. Anyone can read our list-serv, but only members/subscribers can post (membership has its privileges). (*sometimes we will post FREE offers for teachers on behalf of non-members)

To join our list-serv:

Use the drop-down list to select “psa-abcde” (fortunately we are the first one in the list!). To post a message to our list-serv, please send our Past-President Colin Plant an email at colinplant@shaw.ca Our list-serv is moderated to avoid getting spammed.

#3 Not sure of your membership status? Please contact the BCTF at 1-800-663-9163 and ask for the PSA Division.

